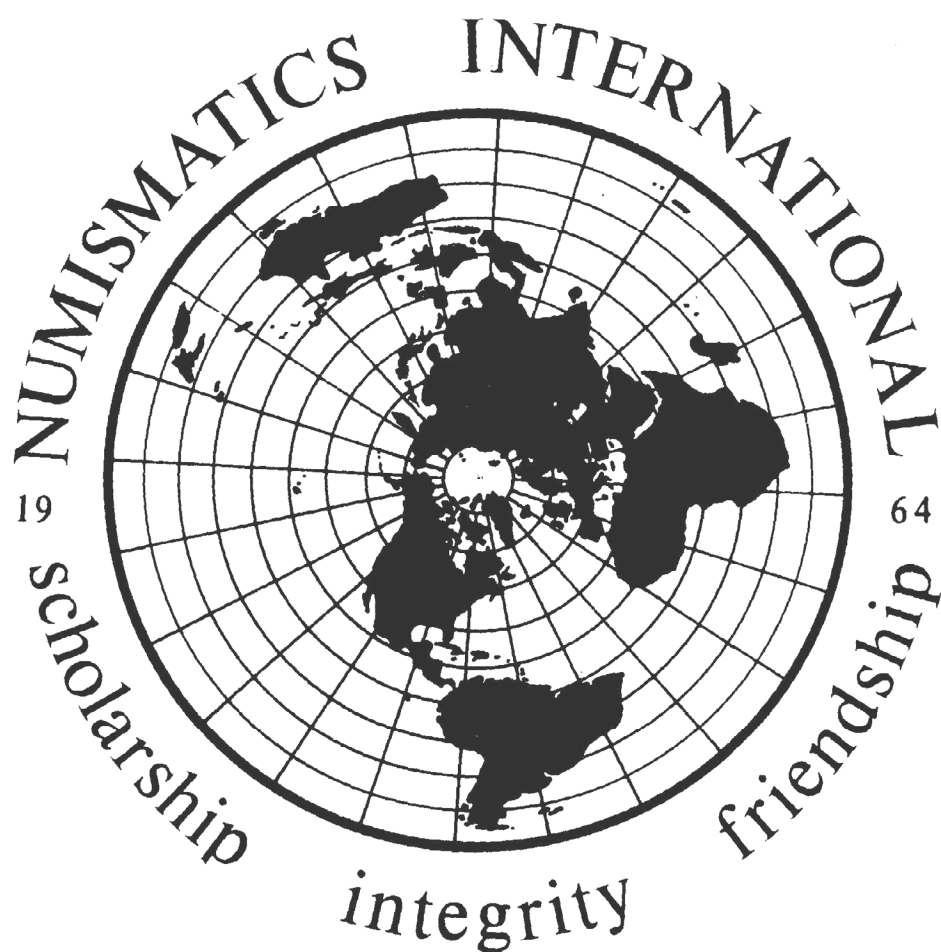


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Welcome to the final edition of the *Bulletin* for 2009. We offer some interesting articles for you; I hope you enjoy them.

The past year has certainly been a stressful year for the world's economies, not the least of which is that of the USA. Of course, I am referring to the peoples of the world, not just abstract data. Personally, I am 57 years old, a child of depression-era parents who raised their family as if the Great Depression would return again. During the past year it seemed at times that it might return again. My personal situation is not so dire that I have stopped collecting, but with high unemployment and job insecurity I can see why collectors could be very cautious about acquiring new specimens for their collection. Indeed, it seems the coin markets that I am familiar with stalled last year. However, now I see renewed energy in the coin markets with prices moving higher, in fact, so much higher that I wonder whether collectors are moving their capital from cash and financial investments into bullion and coins.

Regardless of the economy in your region, the NI Board of Governors, staff and I all wish each of you peace, health and prosperity in the coming New Year and renewed enthusiasm in your coin collecting and research endeavors.

Herman Blanton

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The Mancusos of Jaca

Aureo Subastas

Reprinted from Aureo Subasta, Barcelona. Auction catalog 21 & 22 October 2009
Caballero de las Yndias, tercera parte, España. Lot 1663.



Kingdom of Aragon and Navarre. Sancho Ramírez (1063-1094). Jaca. Mancuso. (Cru.V.S. 194) (C.C. 129). Obv: Bust right. Rev.: Tree with cross above among stars. Gold, 1.98 grams, approximately 19 mm. Legend:

Obverse
✠ S. A. NC INDINE

Reverse
ARA-GON

The first notations found on Aragonese early medieval gold coinage make references to the “*mancusos iacensis*” and “*auro de Jaca*,” meaning mancusos from Jaca and gold of Jaca. We interpret such comments as pieces that follow the arab gold standard but struck in Jaca, the original mint for the Kingdom of Aragon. The existence of imitations of the Andalusi dinars struck in Barcelona, since the beginning of the XI century, had led the scholars to presume that the mancusos from Jaca would also be of the imitation type.

They were surprised at the appearance of one specimen with the same typology as the late type Sancho Ramírez Aragonese billon numerary, only struck in gold. It meant the appearance of the first Peninsular Christian coin struck away from the Moslem pattern, a whole century prior to the Leonese and Portuguese *morabetinos*. The first known sample, holed, appeared in Turkey and was sold by Galeria de Monnaies (sic) in 1978. At that time there was word of a second specimen. We believe the second specimen is the one presented here, a problem-free example.

This piece might be related to the tribute of 500 mancusos paid annually by Sancho Ramírez to the Pope, in order to legitimize his sovereignty, and in turn used to finance the crusades. Other sources also refer to them; a testament from AD 1100 relates that Valencia, countess of Pallars, donated twice in “*uncias de auro de Jacca*.” This mancuso has the appearance of the humble dinero although the legend is different. On the obverse, instead of the usual SANCIVS REX, the more solemn SANC IN D NE (SANCIVS IN DEI NOMINE) is found following the tradition initiated in Visigothic times by King Wamba (AD 672-80), who used it on his *trientes*. The mancusos of Sancho Ramírez were probably coined by the end of his reign since they show the same cut as the dineros of Monzon, struck from 1089 on. Without a doubt, the gold mancuso of Jaca is one of the most historically important coins of the early medieval period.

NI

Dr. Molnar's Star of Bethlehem

Bob Forrest, NI #2382

There have been many attempts to identify the Star of Bethlehem with some real astronomical event. It has, for example, been argued that the 'Star' was the spectacular appearance of Halley's Comet in 12 BC;¹ another theory is that it was a triple conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn in the constellation of Pisces in 7 BC;² yet another theory is that it was a nova that appeared on the border of the constellations Capricorn and Aquila in the spring of 5 BC.³ (Yet another theory is that it was an alien spaceship, but let's not go there!)

The purpose of this article is to discuss another numismatically related theory of the Star of Bethlehem, proposed by Dr. Michael R. Molnar. This theory featured in *The Numismatist* in December 2002 (pp. 1421-24) and in more detail in his book *The Star of Bethlehem: the Legacy of the Magi* (1999) (to which cited page numbers refer in what follows). It is also currently (May 2009) promoted on Dr. Molnar's web-site at <http://www.eclipse.net/~molnar/>. His theory is that Christ was born on April 17th, 6 BC (pp. 108-9; p. 118), the Star of Bethlehem being the heliacal rising (i.e., in the dawn sky, hence "in the east" in Matthew 2:2) of the planet Jupiter in the constellation of Aries. (Jupiter was the giver of kingship; its heliacal rising was the time of its greatest astrological influence; and Aries was the astrological sign of Judea.) But it wasn't just the presence of Jupiter alongside the Sun in Aries that signaled the birth of the Jewish Messiah-King to the Magi, for on that date, at a little after noon, Bethlehem time, the planet underwent an occultation by the Moon, an event which "amplified" still more the king-giving powers of the heliacally risen planet, even though it would have been invisible in the glare of the noon-day sun (p. 86-89). The astrological message was enhanced even further by the presence of Saturn in Aries and of Venus in Pisces (pp. 98-99), all of which is well argued with respect to ancient Hellenic astrological beliefs. True, an invisible lunar occultation of an heliacally risen Jupiter in Aries doesn't sound like much of a Star of Bethlehem, but Dr. Molnar has a good answer to this: it is the very fact that this was such an obscure sign—one which would have been recognized by trained astrologers, but not by ordinary mortals—which explains the otherwise puzzling verse of Matthew 2:7, in which Herod is clearly oblivious of any obvious sign in the sky. A blazing comet, spectacular conjunction of the planets, or nova would have been obvious to all, trained astrologer or otherwise (p. 85).

It is of particular interest to readers of *NI Bulletin* that Dr. Molnar is a numismatist as well as an astronomer, and that his theory was sparked by his purchase of the Roman provincial coin of Antioch on the Orontes in Syria, pictured about 1-1/2 times actual size in Figure 1, which was issued about AD 13-14. It shows a ram looking back over its shoulder at a star, and it was this image which Dr. Molnar eventually connected with the Star of Bethlehem (Jupiter) in Aries. The same device appears on various other Roman coins of the city at around that time (from about AD 5 to 14).⁴(a) One question that springs to mind, though, is why the Romans would use, on a Syrian coin, an astrological portent relevant to the kingship of Judea, but Dr. Molnar argues (pp. 52-53; pp. 120-21) that it was used in commemoration of the Roman takeover of Judea in AD 6, and a sort of propagandist assertion that the Star of Bethlehem indicated Roman annexation and not the advent of the Messiah. Personally I am left

wondering why they didn't put their propaganda on the Procurator coins issued in Judea itself (as with the later IVDAEA CAPTA types of Vespasian and Titus, for example, though vastly more subtle!), but actually I'm left wondering about a lot more than that. For a start, the ram symbol features in various other ways on the coins of Antioch until as late as the mid third century AD, which seems more consistent with it being some sort of lately-adopted emblem of the city (see note 4p below) than a Roman propagandist hark-back to a messianic Star of Bethlehem in Judea over two centuries earlier. In his article in *The Numismatist* Dr. Molnar does acknowledge this extensive use of the ram symbol, but says that its appearance was "always linked to an important historical event," an explanation I do not find very convincing (especially since the author does not go into details.) After all, if Figure 1 refers to the Star of Bethlehem (albeit in an indirect propagandist way), why would it be applied to other "important historical events" up to two and a half centuries later? It doesn't add up, somehow. But let us follow the ram symbol through these two and a half centuries.

Thus, for example, in the second century we find a ram's head as a field symbol on the reverse of coins whose main design is an eagle.^{4(b)} In the third century the ram features atop a tetrastyle shrine, containing an image of Tyche, the city goddess of Antioch, as depicted on the coin reverse shown actual size in Figure 2. This is taken from a coin of Trebonianus Gallus (AD 251-53), though the type was issued under a number of emperors.^{4(c)} Likewise, on other coins of the third century, the ram symbol features atop the bust/image of the city goddess, depicted without her shrine.^{4(d)} A sketch of each type is given, actual size, in Figures 3 & 4.

Of particular interest is the Antiochian coin-type whose reverse is shown about 1-1/2 times actual size in Figure 5.^{4(e)} This shows the familiar ram and star of Figure 1, but with the addition of a crescent moon. However, this coin dates from AD 55-56 (during the reign of Nero), so why, if Figure 1 shows the Star of Bethlehem, which supposedly involved the Moon as well as Jupiter, does the Moon not appear in Figure 1? Why does it appear on coins issued some 40 years later? Dr. Molnar does deal with this coin (p. 110), but does not address these anomalies. Instead, he interprets Figure 5 as another regal portent, this time as a prediction that Nero "would rise up as a monarch in the Near East" (p. 114)—a prediction never fulfilled, of course, since he committed suicide in AD 68. To be sure, Dr. Molnar comes up with some impressive ancient astrology to support his interpretation, but nevertheless it seems to me that there is a lot he doesn't explain. For example, taking the coins at face value (if you'll pardon the pun), if Figure 1 is supposed to represent Jupiter in Aries (with the Moon omitted for some reason), by the same token ought not Figure 5 to represent some star/planet (presumably Jupiter again, as "the giver of kingship") in conjunction with the Moon in Aries? Yet it doesn't, at least not if Nero is the subject of the prophecy, for Nero's horoscope (p. 112) has no planets at all in Aries, the Moon in Leo, and Jupiter in Scorpio. According to Dr. Molnar, the Ram is on the coin as Aries because it marked the Anti-Midheaven of Nero's horoscope (indicating where he would regain his lost power (p. 113)), the star & crescent together being a symbol of sovereignty rather than a representation of an actual celestial event (p. 110). For myself, I am left wondering why, if astrology is the name of the game for these coins, Figure 5 doesn't bear a star (Jupiter) with a Scorpion and/or a lunar crescent with a

Lion; and why a star on its own indicates an actual celestial event, whereas a star with a crescent doesn't. It all seems a bit inconsistent, somehow.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

But there's more. There is another ram with star & crescent type which dates from AD 128-29 (during the reign of Hadrian)^{4(f)}—what does that signify, astrologically speaking? Dr. Molnar doesn't mention this coin at all, though he does give a horoscope of Hadrian as part of his discussion of regal portents in Hellenic astrology (p. 67 & p. 137-38.) From this we see that Hadrian was born with the Moon and Jupiter in conjunction and in the ascendant, but they were on the boundary of Capricorn and Aquarius, so why is Aries on this coin at all? (It can hardly be for anything like the same reason as Nero!) Yet another ram with star & crescent type dates from AD 145-46 (during the reign of Antoninus Pius),^{4(g)} so what does that signify, astrologically? Again, there is a ram with crescent only type which dates from AD 158-59 (also during the reign of Antoninus Pius)^{4(h)}—so what does that signify?

Yet again, if the ram with star in Figure 1 indicates a stellar ram, hence the constellation of Aries, ought not an eagle with star reverse to indicate the constellation of the Eagle? (There is one, Aquila, but it isn't in the zodiac, and hence cannot feature in a horoscope.) A sketch of the type is shown, actual size, in Figure 6. Now, one such coin was issued under Caracalla,⁴⁽ⁱ⁾ but can we conclude anything astral from it at all? The star cannot represent a planet, since Aquila is not on the zodiac, so this cannot be a horoscope type. Can we, perhaps, conclude that the emperor was born as some nova or comet appeared in that constellation? Maybe, except that under Caracalla, we also find an eagle with a star & crescent between its legs.^{4(j)} A question naturally arises: why does the moon appear on the one coin and not the other, especially since the Moon can never have strayed off the zodiac and into Aquila? The problem is not resolved by adopting Dr. Molnar's tactic with Figure 5, and interpreting the star and crescent as "a symbol of sovereignty" rather than a representation of a real astronomical event, for there is yet another issue of Caracalla which bears the eagle with a crescent only between its legs, the star having wandered off into the field.^{4(k)} The nova/comet has 'moved' (possible with a comet!), the "symbol of sovereignty" has dissolved as a result, and we are again left with a Moon which can never have been in the constellation anyway, all of which leaves the astrologically oriented numismatist in something of a mess. (In any case, the eagle with star can hardly indicate a birth with a nova/comet in Aquila since the type is shared by Septimius Severus, Macrinus and Elagabalus,^{4(l)} and it is scarcely credible that four emperors were all born with the same constellation "astrally active!") The problem is resolved by abandoning altogether the idea that the eagle is a constellation, and treating the star and crescent, singly and together, as simple field symbols indicating something practical like an officinal symbol or series code, and not things seen in the sky. The implication of this would be that if it is true of the eagle it may well be true of the ram as well: eagle with star (Figure 6; Caracalla) parallels ram with star (Figure 1; Star of Bethlehem); eagle with star and crescent (Caracalla) parallels ram with star and crescent (Figure 5; Nero); and eagle with crescent only (Caracalla) parallels ram with crescent only (Antoninus Pius). Remember, too, that one finds the type of Figure 3 with a star/crescent in the field^{4(m)} and the type of Figure 4 with a star in the field,⁴⁽ⁿ⁾ to which we might add that on one coin of the type of Figure 6 we find a ram and a crescent in the field,^{4(o)} and on the coins listed in note 4b we find a star in the field as well as the ram's head. To my mind all of this leaves the astrological interpretation of the coins of Antioch in

considerable doubt, for I begin to wonder if the coin of Figure 5 really tells us any more about Nero's horoscope than the above mentioned eagle with star and crescent type tells us about Caracalla's (i.e., precisely nothing!) As for the most contentious coin of them all, the one in Figure 1, I begin to wonder if its ram with star has anything to do with horoscopes at all,⁴(b) let alone the horoscope of Christ!

Now it is true, as Dr. Molnar indicates in his article, that even if the coin of Figure 1 proves not to be any sort of reference to the Star of Bethlehem then it would not necessarily invalidate his Jupiter-Aries theory of the Star itself. But in the present numismatic forum it is the coin that is of particular interest, and more, if its Star of Bethlehem significance could be established it would constitute a tangible sign—albeit a minor one—that the events of Matthew chapter 2 really did occur. To see the message of the coin collapse, therefore, as I believe it does, deprives the theory of more than a minor aspect, even if it doesn't overthrow it entirely.

¹ Nikos Kokkinos, "Crucifixion in AD 36: The Keystone for Dating the Birth of Jesus" in *Chronos, Kairos, Christos—Nativity and Chronological Studies* presented to Jack Finegan, edited by Jerry Vardaman & E. M. Yamauchi (1989), p.133-163. For his comet theory, see p.158-162 in particular.

² It features, for example, in Werner Keller's classic, *The Bible as History* (1974 ed.), p.333-36, and is mentioned, with some skepticism, in the article "Magi" in James Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible* (1906), vol.3, p.204-5; see also Rev. C. Pritchard's (again skeptical) article "Star of the Wise Men" in Sir William Smith, *A Dictionary of the Bible* (1893), vol.3, p. 1374-76.

³ D.H. Clark, J.H. Parkinson & F.R. Stevenson, "An Astronomical Re-appraisal of the Star of Bethlehem—A Nova in 5 BC", in *The Quarterly Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society*, vol.18 (1977), p.443-49.

⁴ *A Catalogue of Greek Coins in the British Museum: Galatia, Cappadocia & Syria* (1899) (hereafter BMC) under Antioch on the Orontes: a) BMC nos. 62-68. b) See, for example, BMC no. 343 (Marcus Aurelius) & no. 345 (Commodus). c) See, for example, BMC nos. 600-601 (Trajan Decius); nos. 653-55; (Trebonianus Gallus) and nos. 667-68 (Valerian). d) For example, BMC nos. 451-63 (Elagabalus); nos. 470-73 & 484-89 (Severus Alexander) & no. 602 (Trajan Decius). e) This particular coin is BMC nos. 69 & 70, but see also nos. 74 & 75, which are similar, but bear slightly different dates. f) BMC nos. 101-2. g) BMC nos. 116-17; h) BMC no. 123. i) BMC nos. 364-66. j) BMC no. 367. k) BMC no. 368. l) BMC nos. 347-50 (Septimius Severus); nos. 391-92 (Macrinus); & nos. 416-25 (Elagabalus). m) e.g., BMC nos. 470-73 (Severus Alexander) has a star & no. 457 (Elagabalus) has a crescent. n) e.g., BMC nos. 535-38 (Philip I & II) & no. 602 (Trajan Decius). o) BMC nos. 500-503 (Gordian III); p) I should add, however, that the introduction to the BMC suggests that, following K.O. Müller, the Ram was there as a zodiacal sign, but that it indicated the time of year at which the foundation of the city took place (p. lix.). As I have not seen Müller's article on this, I cannot comment on it, but I do find it odd that the ram symbol only begins to feature on the coins of Antioch as late as about 5 AD, whereas the city itself was founded by Seleucus I Nikator in 300 BC. Antioch on the Orontes was a Seleucid mint from at least the time of Antiochus IV, yet the ram seems never to appear on the Seleucid coins of the city.

NI

Coins Countermarked with Political Messages and Related Pieces

Gregory G. Brunk, NI #749

(Continued from September / October 2009 *NI Bulletin*)

Catalog: Part F (France: Royal Fantasies & Bonapartists)

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— France —

Royalist Fantasies

Crown, Lily and Dolphin Fantasies

These countermarked coins were noted in a number of numismatic publications in the 1960s (e.g., a letter to the editor of *The Numismatist* 1964: 902). A note in *World Coins* (1965: 996) suggested they were issued by royalists in Dauphine Province, ca. 1782-1793. The pieces are made from three separate stamps. Sometimes the lily is crowned and sometimes the dolphin is crowned. The pieces were suspicious to me because they are spiffy and show no wear after having been countermarked, but with only two illustrated examples there seemed to be no way to determine if they were genuine.

In gathering data for this series, I blundered upon the *same crown stamp* on a French fifth ecu, but this time the countermark was Crown / G R (March 27, 1968 Hotel Drouout Auction, lot 417). That countermark was interpreted by the auctioneer to mean *Georgius Rex* for George III of England. In turn, the coin was attributed to Jamaica in the West Indies! That discovery indicated all the pieces made from these punches are fantasies, which was further confirmed when I searched the plates of the Hans Schulman auction of the *Howard Gibbs Collection of Counterstamped, Necessity and Siege Coins of the Americas* (March 18, 1966).

The Gibbs collection was remarkable, not only for the many rarities that it contained, but because it is a useful reference for identifying fake and fantasy countermarks. Gibbs did not recognize that many of his pieces were bogus, but since the makers of fantasies often used the *same stamps* on coins supposedly issued in different nations, comparing Gibb's photographs to suspicious pieces will allow many bogus pieces to be exposed as fakes. Lot 1561 in the Gibbs auction was a 1726 French ecu with another Crown / GR made from the *same crown and the same letters*. Lot 1562 also had the same countermark on a 1652 half ecu; while that piece was not illustrated in the Gibbs sale, it was illustrated a few months later in the Nov. 10, 1966, Hans Schulman auction, lot 1171.

Since all the bogus countermarks appear on French coins, they apparently were made in France, but when they were made is uncertain. They may be late 19th century fakes, although the oldest photographs the writer has traced are from the 1960s when large numbers of newly made fantasy countermarks appeared on the market.

Crown / Dolphin

Ecu: 1792



Ecu (approximately 39 mm)

Dolphin and Crown / Lily

Ecu: 1792 UK



Ecu (approx. 39 mm)

These next two Jamaican fantasies from the Gibbs collection also were made using the same crown stamp!



1726 Ecu (approx. 41 mm)



1652 Half Ecu (approx. 34 mm)

After some more searching, the writer spotted another coin by the same faker. It is a 1729 ecu with G R from the same stamps as above, but with a slightly smaller crown.



1729 Ecu (approx. 41 mm)

Lily and Crown Fantasies

This piece was stamped with a different crown and a different lily, but is likely a fantasy too, particularly since the stamps are in pristine condition. The coin saw no wear after having been countermarked and went directly into a collector's cabinet.

Lily / Crown

Half Ecu: 1792



Half Ecu (approx. 33.5 mm)

Owl's Head Fantasies

The *Chouans*—which is Breton for screech owls—were members of the bands of peasant smugglers and dealers in contraband salt who were allies of the Vendee royalists in the 1790s against the revolutionary government. Their leader was Jean “Chouan” Cottureau (1757-94). They are immortalized in Honoré de Balzac’s novel *Les Chouans*.

Louis XVIII was the brother of Louis XVI and became King of France in 1814, but Napoleon soon attempted to regain control. Because the latest known date of an owl’s head countermarked coin is 1813, a number of writers have speculated they were issued by royalists during the 100 days that Napoleon returned to power in 1815. Clearly these coins are anti-Napoleonic since his eye almost always is gouged out, which has been interpreted to mean that Napoleon was “as blind as an owl in the daylight.” In turn, the animal head is that of an owl.

Others interpret the countermark as the head of a cat with bug-eyes. A recent auction stated that it is a caged tiger, allegedly symbolizing Napoleon’s forced exile on the island of Elba. Nevertheless, the most common identification is the owl’s head.

The obvious question to ask about such spiffy pieces is whether they are fantasies. They have been known since at least the early 20th century, and while some of the coins are well worn, the stamps are always in pristine condition. This is very unlike the condition of the genuine countermarked coins that were issued for the 1824 visit of the Marquis de Lafayette to the United States, for example. (They will be cataloged later in this series and provide a standard of comparison for the expected pattern of wear on legitimate political countermarks.)

Many of the Lafayette pieces are really beat-up today, but there is no wear even on the reverse of owl's head coins directly across from the countermark. In other words, *none of these owl's head pieces circulated after stamping as would have occurred if they had been made as souvenirs or as circulating propaganda pieces in the early 19th century*. This pattern also is quite unlike the Crowned V countermarks that were noted earlier.

A close inspection of the numerous photos that have appeared in auction catalogs indicates three different stamps of very similar style were used to countermark these coins. This suggests many were struck by the same maker. The stamps differ most noticeably in the number of feathers on the owl's chin. At least one variety also has what seem to be prominent whiskers, which is why the countermark sometimes is identified as the head of a cat.

Since none of the pieces show any wear or nicks to the countermark, they certainly were not put back into circulation. They probably are fantasies made for the coin collector's market during the late 19th or early 20th century, although it is at least possible they were sold as souvenirs by local jewelers in one of the Western provinces. Does any reader have further information?

Owl's Head Facing and the Eye of Napoleon Usually Gouged Out

One Franc: UK

Two Francs: 1813, L'an 13, L'an 14

Three Francs: UK

Five Francs: 1806, 1809, 1810 (2), 1811 (6), 1812 (6), 1813 (2), UK (5)



Five Francs (approx. 38 mm)



Five Francs (approx. 39 mm)

The reverse of such a coin is rarely illustrated, but when it is, you can see that the coin never circulated after having been stamped.



Five Francs



Five Francs



Two Francs (approx. 27 mm)

Bonapartists

Tenth Anniversary of Napoleon

These pieces seem to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the rule of Napoleon. Apparently nothing has been written about them, although three examples have been noted in old auctions. They were made from a prepared stamp, and may have been issued in 1814. Most of the pieces are so beat-up that auctioneers were uncertain about their details—which may be noted incorrectly below—but at least three different countermarked coins of this sort do exist.

NAPOLEON / 10 ANS

Décime: 1793

Five Centimes: UK (Louis XIV)

Six Deniers: UK (Louis XVI)



Six Deniers? (Approx. size of a US Quarter Dollar)

Crowned N in Arched Rectangle

In 1812 and 1814, toward the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the French-controlled cities of Strasbourg and Antwerp were besieged by Allied forces. Their mints issued two sorts of coins as political power oscillated between the Bonapartists and Royalists. Some of the Strasbourg pieces have a Crowned N with ribbons extending from the crown. Others have a Crowned L with three lilies indicating Louis XVIII.

This coin below is a Louis XVIII décime whose crowned L has been replaced by a crowned N. So far only this one example has been traced.

Crown / N in Arched Rectangle of Beads

Décime: 1815-Strasbourg



Décime (approx. 32.5 mm)

Crowned N Fantasies

The countermark of a Crowned N occasionally is listed in auctions on large silver coins without any explanation. The style of this N with five beads in its crossbar is somewhat like the Antwerp siege coins of 1814 and 1815. At first I thought the countermark might be legitimate until I discovered a fantasy purported to have been issued for Napoleon's exile in Elba in 1814 that used the same crown.

Such pieces were made from whatever stamps were available to the person who made them, rather than stamps prepared specially for the purpose of countermarking coins. During the 19th and 20th centuries it was possible to purchase sets of letter punches and other sorts of punches from hardware dealers. That made it easy for anyone who wanted to make fantasy countermarks to do so by using individual letter punches and even fancier, standard types of stamps, such as crowns.

Crown / N

France Five Francs: 1814
Spanish-American Eight Reales: 1812
Spain Eight Reales: 1808



Five Francs (approx. 37 mm)



(approx. 39 mm)

Eight Reales

**Odd Head of Napoleon, Laureate Right / ELBA.
Rev: Crowned N between 5 N and FCS / 1814**



Five Francs size planchet or perhaps a milled off Five Francs

Louis Napoleon (Napoleon III)

Louis Napoleon was the nephew of the Emperor Napoleon. He lived for a time in exile in England, and tried to stage a coup upon arriving at Boulogne in a channel steamer with fifty supporters in 1840. Instead, the local garrison arrested him and his entourage. He was sentenced to life imprisonment, but escaped six years later from Fort de Ham. In 1848 he became President of the Second Republic. In 1852 he staged a coup, declared himself emperor, and took the title Napoleon III.

As a way to invoke the imperial majesty of his uncle, Louis Napoleon purchased a well-worn eagle in England before setting sail for Boulogne, and it was captured along with his entourage. The eagle was such a tattered bird that it became the subject of countless cartoons and eventually appeared on many of the satirical medals and engraved coins that were issued by his detractors thirty years later. The joke was that the bird was not an eagle at all, but a vulture that the future emperor tried to convince people was an eagle. He also was a chain smoker, and often is depicted with a cigarette in his mouth on satirical pieces.



Satirical ten centimes of Napoleon III (approx. 30 mm); weird eagle reverse.

Eagle in Circle

This standing eagle in circle countermark is similar in motif, but not identical in style to the standing eagle in circle that appears in the center of the arms of some Napoleon III silver coins. Given the dates of the countermarked coins, the first countermark may have been issued by Bonapartists during the rule of Louis Philippe or perhaps during the Second Republic when Louis Napoleon was President.

Eagle Standing in Nest, Head Right, Wings Spread (in Circle)

Franc: 1830, 1831

Ecu: UK

Five Francs: 1822, 1828, 1830, (2) 1831, 1832, 1834, UK (2)



Five Francs (approx. 39 mm)



Ecu (approx. 40 mm)

The 1830 five francs is particularly interesting as it clearly was turned into a protest piece by giving the bust of Louis Philippe (1830-48) a Pinocchio nose. All examples of these countermarked coins that I have traced show no wear to the countermark. That is suspicious and suggests they might have been made for the collector's market. Does any reader know anything else about these pieces?



**Five Francs (approx. 39 mm)
Louis Philippe five francs with a Pinocchio nose**



Enlargement of the first style of eagle countermark

A second eagle in circle countermark is about the same size, but is different in its style and the eagle is crowned. If the pieces are genuine, rather than fantasies made for sale to collectors, they would have been issued during the rule of Napoleon III.

**Crowned Eagle Standing on Ground, Head Right, Wings Spread
(in circle)**

Franc: 1850

Five Francs: 1849, 1851



Five Francs (approx. 39 mm)



Enlargement of the second style of eagle countermark

Georges Boulanger

Boulanger was a French military hero, who was appointed Minister of War in 1886, but was snubbed and not included in the government of May 1887. Then he was appointed commander of the XIII Corps and a political movement quickly formed to urge him to become Emperor. In 1888 the government stripped him of his command for coming to Paris without leave and for meeting in disguise with Prince Napoleon in Switzerland.

Boulanger was elected to the national assembly upon his removal from the Army. In January of 1889 he was reelected from Paris by a landslide and a crowd of supporters encouraged him to seize the government. He lost his nerve and instead spent the night celebrating with his mistress. The newly formed government indicted him for treason and the Chamber of Deputies waved his parliamentary immunity. Boulanger fled the

country and was convicted in absentia. He went into exile on the Channel Island of Jersey, and in 1891 committed suicide in Brussels over the grave of his mistress.

Numerous ten centimes have NAPOLEON III erased and replaced by an engraved BOULANGER to now read BOULANGER EMPEROR. The dates also are changed, and the new dates of 1888 to 1893 apparently reflect when the pieces were engraved. Some are holed and clearly were used as political medals. All the known pieces are in the same style of engraving, which is most obvious regarding the chevrons that appear on the general's collar and cap. So they must have had the same source.

These two engraved ten centimes of Napoleon III were used as political medals by Bonapartists. Their engraving is so well done that the pieces—particularly when well-worn—sometimes are reported as countermarked. Indeed, the writer was not able to tell if some numerals of the various dates of these pieces were engraved or made using punches. Support for the general declined after Boulanger did not declare himself emperor and was exiled. This is reflected in his decapitation by a slash mark through his neck on the right piece below.



Two different Ten Centimes (approx. 30 mm)

to be continued...

NI

Quiz Answers

1. The first coins of Lydia, ca. 600 BC, featuring a lion and bull. 2. Dr Dennis G. Rainey. 3. Food and Agricultural Organization (a UN body). 4. To raise money for producing food.

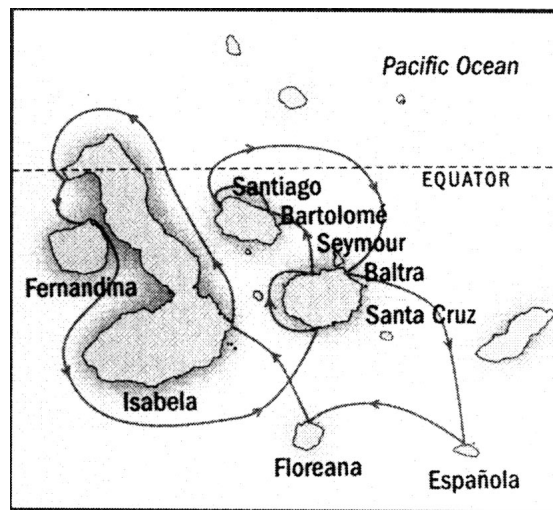
Coins of the Galápagos Islands

Bill Mullan, NI #1040

When coins from the Galápagos Islands were introduced I was more than just interested.

Several years ago my daughter and her husband invited me to join them on a journey to the islands. The tour included a trip to Peru to see the ruins at Machu Picchu. I have been fascinated by the story of the discovery of those ruins since childhood after reading about them in the *Book of Knowledge*. So I went on the trip anticipating enjoying every aspect of Machu Picchu but expecting to be a little bored by the islands. Wow, was I mistaken! The Galápagos Islands are a fantastic place to visit; for that matter so is Machu Picchu.

Our trip to Guayaquil, Ecuador, by way of Miami, began on large commercial airliners, but then we went to Baltra airport by small plane. There we boarded the ship to cruise the Islands. It was larger than most of the vessels we saw in the local waters, but by cruise ship standards it was a small one, just seventy passengers. Our tour was with the Lindblad organization which has since partnered with the Smithsonian Institution to offer tours to all parts of the world. Our ship, the *Polaris*, offered resident dive instructors, naturalists, photographers and small-boat handlers in addition to the crew who fed us and ran the ship. The map shown here has been clipped from a Lindblad brochure and shows the archipelago and its location vis-à-vis the equator. The islands lie 600 miles off the coast of Ecuador in a perfect location to support the sailing vessels that plied the Pacific Ocean looking for whales and needing a place where fresh food and water could be obtained.



The map shows the route taken around the Islands by the *Polaris* so you can see that the ship crossed the equator on several occasions. On the first such occasion the “Shellbacks” (those who have crossed the equator before) hold an initiation for all the “Polliwogs” (those who are crossing for the first time) during which they are summoned before Neptune’s court (Neptune rules the seven seas) and are welcomed into the world of the Shellbacks. The “crossing the line” ceremony conducted on the *Polaris* is nowhere near as rigorous as those conducted by the US Navy.

Upon arriving at the Islands I began taking pictures in the fashion of a true tourist, snapping one poor picture after another out of fear that the opportunity to get a better one might never arrive. On one occasion I was trying to get a picture of a Lava Lizard that was sunning itself in a clearing about fifteen feet away. Knowing how skittish lizards can be, I racked out my zoom lens as far as it would go and shot a picture of it. “Get closer,” our guide said, and I inched forward a couple of feet and quickly shot

another. “Hey, they don’t bite, get closer,” the guide said, so I went in to about three feet away and slowly composed a picture of the lizard which I think actually posed itself so that I got his best side.

You may have heard the animals there do not have the slightest fear of humans. I can assure you that it is true. The situation is best understood by a sign we encountered from time to time which read “RESPECT THE HABITAT OF THE ANIMALS PLEASE STAY ON THE MARKED TRAILS.” It turned out that many of the animals couldn’t read and the beaten paths were the preferred location for bird nests, basking iguanas, and sea lions with nothing better to do than hang out there. It was sometimes impossible to stay on the paths because they were filled with animals. The only animals that showed the slightest fear were the brightly colored Sally Lightfoot Crabs that could be seen searching the rocks and crevices a foot or so above the water line. Any sudden motion would send them scurrying.

I will not force my pictures of the trip upon you, but I’ll describe my taking of one of them to illustrate just how oblivious the local fauna are to humans. As I was visiting one of the islands I saw what appeared to be an octopus on the beach many yards from the water. Closer inspection revealed the “Octopus” to be a group of marine iguanas arranged in a cluster, all heads together in the center. The arms of the octopus were formed by their bodies and tails radiating outward. As I positioned myself over them and re-shifted myself to avoid my shadow in the image I felt sure that they would break formation. Even though I took several shots at different exposures, the black animals against glaring sunlit sand was too much contrast for the photo to turn out well. At least not well enough to publish it. I am still amazed that not one of them moved out of their conference arrangement.

After returning to Washington DC I had several conversations with the Charles Darwin Foundation about the possibility of having coins struck showing some of the unique creatures of the Islands. While the Islands remain relatively underdeveloped as compared to many of the world’s major tourist attractions there are a few stores and inns where memorabilia can be purchased. The coins could provide merchandise for sale that would be a source of income not only to the organization but to the vendors as well. Alas, word came back to us almost immediately that a photographer was in the Islands taking pictures to be used in the design of coins. Someone had beaten us to the project!

Several coins have now been issued. The smaller coins are generally sold as a set for about thirty US dollars while the eight-*dolares* coin is offered separately for about twenty US dollars. The obverse of each coin bears the coat of arms of the Galápagos Islands. At first I could not verify the authenticity of the arms; it could have been “invented” just for these coins, but finally I was directed to a web site where the story of the development of both the flag and the coat of arms is given: www.galapagos.to/TEXTS/LUNDH-5.HTM. The story is well worth reading, and the descriptions of the flag and arms are given in great detail in more precise heraldic terms than I use here.

The coat of arms bears the Galápagos Tortoise in the center of a shield. *Galápagos*, a Spanish name for the island tortoise, has been accepted as the name of the group. The official name is *Archipiélago de Colón*. In separate quarters of the shield are (1) a volcano representing the origin of the islands, (2) the *Mercedes* sailing ship which took possession of the archipelago for Ecuador, (3) a cornucopia signifying agricultural potential, and (4) a representation of the colors of the flag. On the upper edge of the shield are thirteen stars, too small to be seen in this photo, representing the major islands in the archipelago. The line behind the tortoise represents the equator.



The Woodpecker Finch appears on the one centavo (copper plated zinc, 19.1 mm). It uses the twig in its beak as a tool to extract grubs from holes in the bark of trees. The use of tools by birds is rare and is most often associated with corvine birds such as the raven and the crow. If Darwin had noted this behavior it would have been a special case in his study of how the different types of beaks allowed birds to eat their preferred foods. The use of a tool allows the short beaked woodpecker finch to gather food that it would otherwise not be able to harvest. The study of the finches of the Galápagos Islands is one of the better known parts of Darwin's work but it was only after many years that he came to the conclusion that natural selection was behind the emergence of new species.



The Galápagos sea lion, the subject on the five centavos (copper-nickel, 21.2 mm), is usually the first of the animals that tourists encounter. Except for those who arrive by ship, visitors deplane at Baltra airport and are carried by bus or automobile to the pier that serves the nearby anchorage. The passage down the pier is often complicated by the presence of sea lions lolling in the sun. The trip is not easy if one is carrying a full load of luggage. One has to step over the sea lions or walk around them because they refuse to move. One day we watched sea lions playing in the surf. They rode submerged in the face of the waves, quite visible in the clear water. Just like their human counterparts, they caught the waves at just the right moment and rode them as long as they could before hitting the froth at the beach.



Pictured on the ten centavo (copper-nickel, 17.9 mm) is the Marine Iguana. It has developed the ability to dive and swim, feeding mostly on aquatic plants and algae. It finds its food in waters up to forty feet deep in which it can stay submerged for up to thirty minutes at a time. Since it is a reptile, not able to control its body temperature, it has to limit the time it can stay in water made cool by the Humboldt Current. To recover



from the chill it spends much of its time basking on the costal rocks or on sand further inland. The iguana is slow moving on land and is therefore easy prey for the dogs and cats that came with civilization. Because they get most of their moisture from sea water they have glands on their heads from which they secrete a concentrated salt solution that rids their bodies of excess salt. The encrustation of dried salt on their heads does little to enhance their already marginal beauty.



I did not encounter the subject of the twenty-five centavos (copper-nickel, 24.3 mm) because I didn't go SCUBA diving. I did see the vertical fin of a Mola Mola (ocean sunfish) gliding along as if it were a shark. Most of those who dove in the waters off the island shores saw many sharks. At ten feet long they scared everyone, but I guess the sharks do not recognize humans as prey for like most of the animals in the Galápagos they seemed to be indifferent to humans. This species of shark is known to inhabit equatorial waters around the globe and since they feed

on fish that are also sought by commercial fishermen they are often caught in their nets. Its conservation status is "near threatened."



Featured on the fifty centavos (copper-nickel, 30.6 mm) is the Masked Booby. Among the boobies of the islands the masked version is the largest but the least colorful. The other major species, the red-footed and blue-footed boobies, have just what their names imply, red and blue feet. The color is intense! The boobies are known for their spectacular dives into the sea when feeding. At times when schools of small fish are near the surface great numbers of the birds fold their wings and dive from hundreds of feet into the school whipping the ocean into a froth of white foam. The masked boobies create

their nests by making a shallow depression in the sand, often in the trails to which humans are restricted.



The *dólar* coin (manganese-brass, 26.5 mm) features the Galápagos penguin. It is a small penguin, growing to no more than twenty inches high and weighing about five pounds. We encountered the species during costal expeditions off the rocky coasts of some of the smaller islands. We explored in rubber boats called "Zodiacs" that are stowed aboard the *Polaris* and were lowered into the ocean by crane when needed. As we skirted an island's perimeter the penguins swam beside the craft eyeing us with the same curiosity that we humans used on them. For the most part when the

penguins were not in the water they were found on steep rocky cliffs which prevented us from getting a close view. The penguins have many enemies both on shore and in the sea so the species is listed as “endangered” with an estimated population of 1,500.

One has to feel sorry for the cormorant shown on the two-*dolares* coin (bi-metallic: core of copper-nickel-aluminum, outer ring of nickel, 28.0 mm). It was probably the lack of predators on the islands (before the coming of man) that caused the flightless cormorant to lose its ability to fly. There just wasn't enough reason to expend all the energy necessary to take to the air. The bird retains one behavior that it has in common with their flying relatives. After flight, which often entails diving into the sea for food, the flying versions of the cormorant return to land where they spread their wings to the sun to dry them and preen their feathers spreading the oils that make them waterproof. The flightless cormorants go thru the same instinctive procedure waving their ragged little wings (they are only about one third the size they would have to be if the bird was to manage flight) in the bright sunshine as if it were required to keep them in good shape. Once more man and his introduction of alien species is a great danger to the survival of the cormorant. Like the Galápagos penguin it is down to only about 1,500 individuals.



The signature creature of the Galápagos is the tortoise that appears on the five-*dolares* coin (bi-metallic: core of nickel, outer ring of copper-aluminum-nickel, 32.0 mm). It is the largest of the world's tortoises which probably led to its downfall. In the times of sailing vessels the slow moving animals were captured by whaling crews who kept them alive for months aboard their vessels as a source of fresh meat. Since the animals cannot swim between islands each of the twelve islands that supported a population developed its own species. Through efforts by conservationists ten of the twelve species have survived, but the tortoise of Charles Island is extinct, and the Pinta Island species is represented by only a single male named “Lonesome George.” In addition to the direct depredations caused by man, the introduction of donkeys, pigs, goats and rats (inadvertently) put great pressure on the animal's habitat. An effort funded by conservators has managed to remove all feral animals from some of the smaller, uninhabited islands. The Charles Darwin Foundation supports a breeding program that has been successful in raising small numbers of the ten surviving species which are being re-introduced into the places where their predators and rivals have been eliminated. Alas, lonesome George is still without a mate of his own species so he is being cross-bred with a female tortoise from another species.





We didn't see any of the whales which grace the eight *dolares* (copper-nickel, 29.5×50 mm) because our tour of the islands was out of season for watching them. The whales feed in the cold waters of the northern Pacific during the summer months. The whale shown on the coin is the humpback whale, a baleen whale that feeds on krill and small fish that are strained from the water by means of boney filters in their mouths. A large male might weigh 33 tons. Compared to a blue whale at 130 tons it is relatively small, but there are a number of much smaller whales, like the minke, pilot, and beluga, so we will count it as medium sized. They have been made famous by their spectacular jumps where two thirds or more of their bodies are thrust out of the water and they come crashing down on their backs. The whale has developed an unusual cooperative feeding technique called the bubble net. A group of individuals circle a school of appropriate sized fish blowing a curtain of bubbles that

enclose them in an ever decreasing area. When the fish are sufficiently concentrated, the whales swim upward through them taking large quantities into their mouths as they rise.

When these coins came on the market they were described by the vendors as being "unauthorized" issues. This means they were privately produced without official sanction of the Ecuadorian government. I am researching this interesting part of our hobby as it applies to these coins and another set that apparently comes from China. I hope to make it the subject of a future bulletin article.

The set of coins described in this article was designed by Joseph Lang, whose initials appear on each coin. Joe is a partner of Stephan Album Rare Coins located in Santa Rosa, California. In order to test the potential market for the coins he sent information to a set of wholesalers with pictures and specifications of the coins. The coins were then minted by Moffatt and Company mint in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Ten thousand sets of the smaller denominations were issued while only three thousand of the ten-*dolares* coins were struck.

Most of the coins for the US market were distributed by Joel Anderson of Grover Beach, California, who supplied the information I am reporting here.

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Book News and Reviews

***The Half-Crowns of Charles I Minted in England, Scotland & Ireland, 1625-1649* (Five volumes): *Volume I: Introduction etc.; Tower Mint under King, 1st and 2nd Horsemen* by Maurice Bull (published by Maurice Bull, in association with Dix Noonan Webb). It is available from *Coin News* for GBP 85 plus postage and packing (World Surface GBP 8, World Air GBP 10). To confirm pricing and availability, contact by e-mail: info@tokenpublishing.com.**

The coinage of Charles I is one of the most fascinating but also most complicated series in all of British numismatics. Until now, the most detailed single work on the subject is the book of the John G. Brooker Collection by J.J. North and P.J. Preston-Morley, published by Spink in 1964 as volume 33 of the *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles*. John Brooker amassed over 1350 coins of Charles I between 1944 and 1978, including many from the even larger R.C. Lockett Collection when it was sold at auction. There are 1266 coins, with many die varieties, included in the *Sylloge* catalogue.

The *Sylloge* includes an article by J.P.C. Kent on “Coinage at the Tower Mint,” which includes the remark “*The classification of Charles’s silver coinage has always presented problems, and a unified system appears as elusive as ever.*” Although many academic articles on different parts of the coinage have been published since the *Sylloge*, no academic has published a comprehensive catalogue. Now a private collector, Maurice Bull, has devoted his retirement to compiling a catalogue of all the die varieties of Charles I half crowns. In his introduction he says he was inspired by the observation in Kent’s article. According to an interview he gave to the British magazine *Coin News*, he for long “had a vague notion to rectify this situation one day.” He started work on New Year’s Day 1998 while still running a business and has worked on it full time since he retired six years ago.

Mr. Bull’s task has meant photographing and numbering all the varieties of the equestrian portraits (100), mintmarks (160), legends (39), punctuation variants, shield style reverses (118), Irish harps (100), Scottish lions (50), Declaration variants (33) and Declaration reverses (40). He has studied the collections of the major British museums (the British Museum, the Ashmolean in Oxford, the Fitzwilliam in Cambridge, the Birmingham Museum, the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow, the National Museum of Wales and the Royal Mint Museum) as well as countless auction catalogues and private collections and the academic literature. Unlike the Brooker book, he covers the Scottish and Irish issues as well as the English (but, of course, only covers half-crowns).

Volume I, newly published, covers just the First and Second Horseman issues of the Tower mint under the King. This covers Spink 2763-2771 or North 2200-2207. Bull has detailed descriptions and photographs of 261 varieties of these coins. To navigate through this, he has created a new numbering system with separate numbers for each variety of obverse and reverse, e.g., Bull 75/7. Where differences are very small, there are numbers such as Bull 148a/20 and 148b/20.

THE HALF-CROWNS OF CHARLES I 1625-1649



Volume I
TOWER MINT UNDER KING
1st & 2nd HORSEMEN

By
Maurice Bull

Mr. Bull has found 487 possible obverse die variants of Tower half-crowns under the king, based on the pattern which emerged during his study. He has assigned numbers to all of them, even though some have never been recorded and may not exist. His aim is to have a numbering system which will accommodate future discoveries. He has identified 139 different reverses.

The sheer amount of work that has gone into this study is awesome. The high quality photographs of every coin, together with magnified photos of key details of each coin, make the book very user-friendly, although the condition of many Charles I hammered coins will still frustrate the efforts of collectors to identify die-types.

Tower under King
Hawkins 1a³ (1C-03-00-17)
Cross Calvary

Bull 47E / 2
(0-16)

(1626-27)
N.2202, S.2766



MAG : BRI : FRI : ET : HI (sic)

First horseman
(No ground-line)
Sword above shoulder



Scrolls on flank



CHRISTOAVSPICE



Error FRI

Off fore-leg in line with R



Obverse 47E X – Cross - C First horseman – Scrolls on housing - No ground line
1C King holding a medium sword, slightly bent, above his shoulder,
tip through inner beading and pointing to C in CAROLVS
mm. 3 Cross Calvary (Cross – C above crown)

leg. 17E CAROLVS : D : G : MAG : BRI : FRI : ET : HI : REX
Colons (Error sic↑)

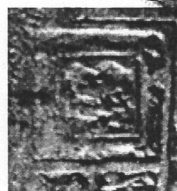
Reverse 2-0-16

Square-topped shield
Minus long cross
Subtle differences in alignment
3 fan-like lines top and bottom
Flaps below base scrolls

mm. 3 Cross Calvary @ 12 o'clock

leg. (mm) CHRISTOAVSPICEREGNO
No pellets letters evenly spaced, some askew

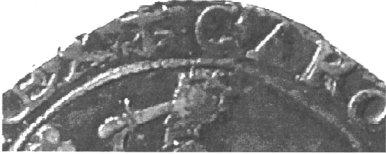
Harp B16
Strings 6



Scots lion L12?
8 outer Lys

Specimen Provenance
F Image by J.G. Brooker 287.→ Snellenburg, 14.69 gm, 226.7 grs

Tower under King
Hawkins 1b (1C-09-11-30a)
Pellet + Anchor (↓) + Pellet



MAG : BR : FR : ET HI

Bull 75 / 7
(↓/↓-0-40)
(6-30 o'clock)
First horseman
(No ground line)
Sword above shoulder





Scrolls on flank

(1628-29)
N.2203, S.2767
Anchor (↓)




CHRISTO AVSPICE


Off fore-leg in line with **R** Sword points to **R** S- below vertical line

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Obverse 75 First horseman – Scrolls on housing - No ground line</p> <p>1C King holding a short sword, slightly bent, above his shoulder, tip inside inner beading pointing to R in CAROLVS</p> <p>mm. 9(↓) Pellet + Anchor + Pellet (pellet - C above crown) (Pellets uncertain) (Straight flukes)</p> <p>leg. 30a CAROLVS D : G : MAG : BR : FR : ET HI : REX Colons, but not after CAROLVS & ET</p> |  |
|---|---|

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Reverse 7-0-40</p> <p>mm. 9(↓) Anchor (Small with straight flukes) @ 11:30 o'clock</p> <p>leg. CHRISTO AVSPICE REGNO (mm) No pellets Some letters askew</p> |    |
|--|--|





Scots lion L19
8 outer Lys

Specimen Provenance (continued in 'Over-spill')

GVF Image by British Museum (29) 1839-3-9-8, 14.39 gm, 222.0 grs

164

IRISH HARPS
(Often too poorly struck to be certain)

Angelic



A 1
6 strings



A 2
6 strings



A 3
6 strings



A 4
6 strings



A 5
5 strings



A 6
? strings



A 7
7 strings



A 8
6 strings



A 9
6 strings



A 10
6 strings

Bird-headed



B 1
6 strings



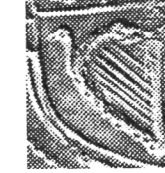
B 2
6 strings



B 3
5 strings



B 4
5 strings



B 5
6 strings



B 6
5 strings



B 7
6 strings



B 8
5 strings



B 9
4 strings



B 10
4 strings



B 11
4 strings



B 12
5 strings



B 13
8-9 strings



B 14
9 strings



B 15
7 strings

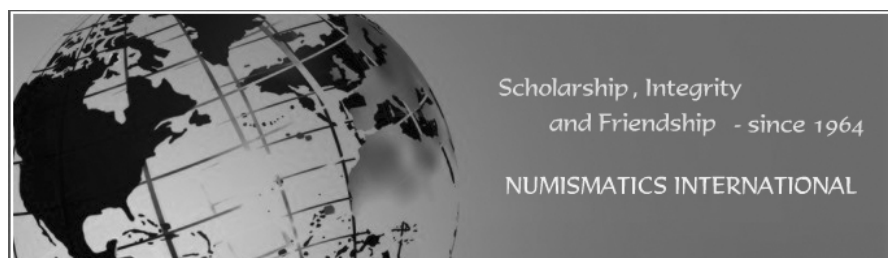
Clearly this work is primarily for the academic community and specialist collectors. Nevertheless, the book is obviously written by a collector who enjoys sharing his knowledge with other collectors and does not assume, like many academic articles, that the reader is an expert. Apart from the detailed catalogue, there are notes on all kinds of related subjects which Mr. Bull has found of interest and thinks other collectors will too: a glossary of numismatic terms, a history of the Julian and Gregorian calendars, an explanation of the origins of the names of months, a note on the Trial of the Pyx during the period of the book, a discussion of the grading of hammered coins, figures for weights in both grams and grains, comments on die making and usage and unattested mints and a chronological summary of Charles I's life. There is much of interest here to the non-specialist. For example, I did not know that until the middle of the nineteenth century members of the British public could take their gold and silver plate to the Mint and have it coined, if there was no urgency, or exchanged for coins if stocks were available. The Mint paid 60 shillings (3 pounds) per Troy pound for silver from which it produced 62 shillings. The King received royalties out of the profits.

The book also contains very detailed photographs of all the Charles I mintmarks, not just those of the coins in this volume but also those of the Tower under Parliament and all the provincial and Scottish mints and the Irish "Blacksmith issues." These are helpful to all collectors of Charles I coins and expand greatly on the mintmark summaries in Spink and Krause.

Four more volumes of this mighty work are forthcoming. Volume II will cover the Third and Fourth Horseman issues of the Tower mint under the King, Briot's hammered and milled coinage and the Aberystwyth horseman issues. Volume III will cover the Tower mint under Parliament and the York, Chester and Shrewsbury mints and will also include notes on the Civil War. Volume IV will cover Oxford and Bristol and coins from unattested mints with the Bristol horse dies and the marks A, B and plume. Volume V will cover Truro, Exeter, Worcester, unattested Worcester-style coins, siege money, Scottish and Irish issues and a selection of forgeries.

It is not surprising that a book of such high quality for a limited audience is not cheap. Apparently the first print run was only 100 copies. I would not be surprised if in 10 years' time it is an expensive rarity in numismatic book auctions!

Reviewed by Robert Ronus



***Irish Medals*, second edition, by Oliver D. Cresswell. Recently published, it has 226 pages including seven tables of data; non-illustrated. Copies are priced at £42 post paid to addresses in the United Kingdom. To addresses in Europe at 55 Euros and to the U.S.A at 80\$ by Air Mail and 73\$ by Surface Mail. Orders should be sent to Oliver D Cresswell, 54 Rosscroole Park, Belfast BT 14 8 JX, Northern Ireland. To other addresses please apply by email to the author at ulsterfamilies@btinternet.com.**

This Standard Work on Irish medals was published in 1961 and became out of print almost immediately. Since then collectors and students have had to rely on photocopies and those rare copies which have appeared for auction.

The Second Edition, extended and improved, has now been issued with a limited print run. This work covers all aspects of the subject from the early engraved medals of the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Militia of the Napoleonic period to medals for more recent campaigns. There are chapters on Gallantry Awards, Regimental Medals and the medals of the early Loyal Associations. War Medals are fully covered from the Siege of Seringapatam in 1799 to the present and Medal Rolls of those officers and men who earned medals on Special Duty detached from their regiments are given. With a picture cover and larger type, this Second Edition will also be out of print in a short time.

Information supplied by the author.

NI

Coin Quiz **Bob Fritsch**

This time our quiz is on topical subjects

1. I have a friend who collects cats on coins. What is the likely candidate for the oldest coin in his collection?
2. Speaking of critters, who is the author of the "Coin Critters" column in World Coin News?
3. F.A.O. coins are popular, but what does F.A.O. mean?
4. What is the purpose of F.A.O. coinage?



NI Educational Programs

Report from the ANA World's Fair of Money, Los Angeles, August 5-9, 2009

Howard A. Daniel III, NI Education Program Moderator, manned a club booth at the ANA's World's Fair of Money and moderated the NI Meeting. The site of the convention was The Los Angeles Convention Center located about four long blocks from his hotel, the Wilshire Grand Hotel. It is not the best part of Los Angeles, but Howard had no problems.



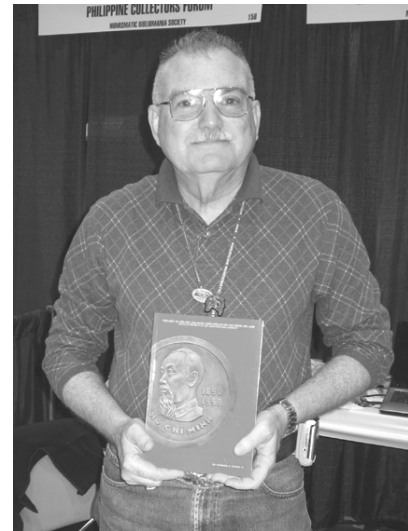
Howard reports this was probably the smallest ANA he ever attended. Even so, the NI booth had a lot of visitors and all 400 of the packets with world coins and a banknote along with information about NI and other organizations were handed out to young and new numismatists. Attendance was low: Wednesday and Thursday were especially slow, but Friday picked up, and on Saturday he finished distributing all of the packets but three; they were gone in the first hour on Sunday. One dealer selling US coins remarked that Howard had more traffic than he and the other dealers in his area; not good.

Three volunteers showed up to help man the booth. One was an NI member, in the picture with Howard at the booth, and he was a big help at making up the packets and giving them to young and new numismatists. I am very sorry that I cannot remember his name but hopefully he will contact the editor to let us know so we can acknowledge him by name. Several other NI members visited the booth too.

The NI meeting conducted at noon on Saturday had about a dozen attendees. This was much more than the usual three or four! Everett Jones, founder of the Chopmarked Collectors Club, was the speaker. The audience was attentive to his talk on chopmarks and he and Howard circulated chopped coins for them to see the actual pieces. The meeting was written up in *Coin World* magazine with some of Howard's chopped coins but unfortunately the writer forgot to mention NI.

Howard is shown here holding a copy of his newly released book the *Socialist Republic of Viet Nam Coins & Currency*.

The next NI club booth and meeting will be at the FUN (Florida United Numismatists) Show in Orlando, FL, January 7-10, 2010. But the next ANA on March 26-28, 2010 will be in Fort Worth, TX, next door to NI's headquarters. Howard is expecting a good attendance from NI officers and members at that meeting.



NI Educational Programs

Florida United Numismatists (FUN) Show: January 7-10, 2010

Orange County Convention Center, Hall HB, North Concourse, 9400 Universal Boulevard, Orlando, FL 32819.

The Numismatics International Education Program Moderator, Howard A. Daniel III, will be manning a club table for NI (and IBNS, NBS & PCF) at the Florida United Numismatists (FUN) Show in Orlando. There will be about 400 free packets with world coins from NI (and a banknote from IBNS) to be given to young and new numismatists in the name of NI at the club table. References will also be given to scout counselors to assist with those scouts working on their numismatic merit badge.

There will be an NI meeting at 12PM (Noon) on January 9 in a meeting room described in the program. All members are welcome and should bring one piece from home or one bought on the bourse to describe during the show-and-tell part of the meeting. There is a map to the convention center at <http://www.funtopics.com/>.

Howard will also be the moderator of the International Bank Note Society (IBNS) meeting at 11AM in the same room and all NI members are welcome to join it. There is often a Mini-Fest during the last 15 minutes of the meeting. This part of the meeting is conducted by collectors of Military Payment Certificates (MPC) and other military financial instruments and Military Fest Certificates (MFC) are usually "paid" to the attendees. Whether or not you collect militaria you should enjoy the Fest.

The club table on the bourse can be designated as a meeting place for NI members and members can also volunteer to staff the table so that Howard can look around the bourse and attend other meetings. Howard is looking forward to meeting new and old NI members in Orlando!



Letters to the Editor

As a NI Member I am always interested in reading about foreign governments and their use of coins and banknotes to accomplish national goals.

Currently I am reading, "Hemingway on the China Front," by Peter Moreira. (A quote from a) passage concerning Ernest and his wife Martha Gellhorn's trip to Chungking on a DC-3.

In November of 1935 China abandon(ed) the silver standard for its currency. The state issued 2.1 billion yuan of banknotes in 1937, and the figure would rise each year to 35.1 billion in 1942, driving up the price of goods and food. The government denied there was any inflation and maintained rigid exchange controls at 20 Chinese dollars to 1 US dollar, even though the black market prices plunged to as much as 100 Chinese dollars per USD. The plane was carrying 55 million dollars that was almost worthless before it hit the ground.

Your magazine means much to me and I look forward to every issue.

Neal B. Coffin

I found a great conversion scale that is useful for the coin collector. You can convert any weight to any other weight, to about 8 decimals. Go to <http://www.myweigh.com/contact-us/weight-converter>, and enter what you have for what you want. It even has Ticals, Mommies, Taels, [Singapore and ROC] and many more.

J. Halfpenny

NI

Member Notice

Ronalea Collectibles, P.O. Box 130, Plumas, Manitoba, Canada R0J 1P0. Not the largest stock or the lowest prices, yet some of our customers have ordered over 200 times. Find out why. We're not out to make a fast buck—we work hard to develop a long-term relationship with our customers. The joy of the big discount soon disappears if the item arrives overgraded. Give us a try. We handle many inexpensive, yet interesting, worldwide items that the large dealers can't be bothered with. Please specify interests.

NI